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CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE OPERATIONAL LEVEL OF WAR

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

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Abstract

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and subsequent military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have brought to the forefront the discussion about the role of cultural competency on the battlefield. There was a rediscovery of the fact that culture and warfare were intertwined. A countless number of articles on how cultural factors affected their operating environment have been published in various military and academic publications. These publications markedly focused on the strategic or the tactical level of war. Very little has been written on the role of cultural competence in the operational level of war. The author attempts to discuss the role of cultural competence in the operational level of war. This is done through the examination of past, current, and potential U.S. and foreign operational experiences. These experiences were examined within the context of the mission set identified in new strategic guidance titled *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*. The author examines what has been done within the U.S. military to address the "cultural" problem set. The author draws the conclusion that cultural factors will continue to play an important part in mission accomplishment and that the current cultural education infrastructure is not sufficient to support that mission accomplishment. Finally, author offers cost-effective solutions for the stated problem set.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

War embraces much more than politics… it is always an expression of culture, often a determinant of cultural norms, in some societies the culture itself.

- John Keegan

In 1970 the Institute for Defense Analyses, U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), published a paper titled *The Content and Evaluation of Cross-Cultural Training Programs*. The paper examined various cross-cultural training programs that were implemented in the 1960s and 1970s in the DOD. It concluded that various programs that were put in place, produced mixed results and that the biggest challenge facing the DOD was the actual implementation of an effective, services-wide, cross-cultural education system.[1] These programs were primarily tied to the war effort in Vietnam and were conducted by anthropologists. The cross-cultural training activities stopped as the Vietnam War came to a close with the U.S. withdrawal. The experience in Vietnam left the U.S. military leadership with an impression that the U.S. military should avoid fighting an unconventional war again. From that point on, the leadership sought to fight only in those wars where the military "could easily fight using existing doctrine and technology and that would have a clear, unequivocal winner."[2] The use for cultural expertise in such a war was perceived to be of minimal value.[3]

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and subsequent military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have again brought to the forefront the discussion about the role of cultural competency on the battlefield. There was a rediscovery of the fact that culture and warfare were intertwined. A number of foreign and American military leaders returning from deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, along with a number of scholars, and foreign policy professionals, have published countless number of articles in various military publications on how cultural factors affected their operating environment. These publications markedly focused on the strategic or the

tactical level of war. Very little has been written on the role of cultural competence in the operational level of war.

This "cultural enlightenment" reached its apex when the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps jointly published the new Counterinsurgency Field Manual in 2007. The manual mentioned the word "culture" 88 times and the word "cultural" 90 times.[4] As part of this so called "cultural turn,"[5] the U.S. military has once again come to a realization that the nature of war has fundamentally changed.[6]

In response to the cultural needs of this newly rediscovered way of war, a number of efforts in each of the military services sought to develop various cultural education programs, language and culture centers, and career development models. This apparently decentralized effort produced the current military cultural education infrastructure that lacks uniformity. With various terminology and stressing over different concepts, there seems to be a divergence of opinions as to what is truly sufficient for the overall mission accomplishment.

After a decade of Counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, there are voices that argue for the retraining of the U.S. military to fight a high-intensity "conventional" war.[7] In January 2012, the Secretary of Defense released the new strategic guidance titled *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense.*[8] The strategy seeks to "[shape] a Joint Force for the future that will be smaller and leaner, but will be agile, flexible, ready, and technologically advanced."[9] The new guidance identifies a number of military missions such as countering terrorism, deterrence, defeat of aggression, stability, and COIN operations.[10] The historical evidence points out that the importance of cultural factors involved in the accomplishment of these missions cannot be understated. While the importance of cultural factors in the operational level of war has been historically established, the current U.S. military cross-cultural capabilities

and infrastructure is not ready to fully support operational commanders in their pursuit of the new strategic objectives.

BACKGROUND

The Good

In the last decade the DOD and its constituent services have reinforced existing programs, started new programs, and have conducted research into other potential cultural education avenues. This infrastructure includes, but not limited to the Defense Language Institute, U.S. Air Force Culture and Language Center at the Air University, U.S. Army Training Command (TRADOC) Culture Center, U.S. Army Human Terrain System, U.S. Navy Center for Language, Regional Expertise and Culture, and U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning. Most of these programs incorporated some version of language and region-specific training. USMC even went as far as establishing a distance-learning culture and language program tied to the Professional Military Education (PME).[11]

The Bad

Certain inconsistencies are bound to exist in an environment where a long-term, comprehensive, truly Joint solution is not being sought. The courses of studies offered by different services are not necessary all mandatory, are not all taught in a classroom, have different objectives, and tend to automatically tie linguistic knowledge or regional familiarity with cross-cultural competence. For example, U. S. Navy Language Skills, Regional Expertise and Cultural Awareness Strategy stresses the importance of the foreign language acquisition as the primary vehicle for cultural learning.[12] The USMC PME program allows a large portion of the officer and enlisted population to not participate in the education. The program is only mandatory for those who recently entered service.[13] This effectively exempts the personnel who

will lead USMC for the next decade. The cultural awareness products produced by the U.S. TRADOC Culture Center proved to be "not useful."[14] The Human Terrain System was too narrow as it sought to have its members "deploy with tactical units to assist in bringing about knowledge of the local population into a coherent framework."[15]

DISCUSSION

Culture, Counterterrorism, and Operational Commander

The new strategy reiterates that the violent extremism under the umbrella of Al-Qa'ida (AQ) remains serious threat to the U.S. interests. It is no surprise that the Counterterrorism (CT) mission set is addressed first in the strategy. The strategy points out that while operations in Afghanistan are expected to die down, the global CT and Irregular Warfare activities will be expected to increase in the form of direct action and less kinetic security force assistance.[16] The CT operations have traditionally been in the strategic realm of military response. They found their way to the strategic level of war due to the objectives and the effects sought through the CT forces implementation. The existence of the Theater Special Operations Commands gives the Combatant Commanders (CCDRs) a "primary mechanism by which [he] exercises C2 over SOF."[17] The Joint Publication 3-26, *Counterterrorism*, points out that even in CT operations terrorist centers of gravity may exist not only at the strategic but also at the operational levels as well.[18] The U.S. military seems to have mastered this kinetic or direct action side of CT. This ability to effectively deliver lethality has been demonstrated by the success of the "Bin Laden Raid." Just as the operational level of war can have strategic effects, so can the strategic level of war have the operational level effects.[19] This usually makes the operational commander the one left to deal with the public relations challenges once a CT operation takes place.

It has been argued by the CT professionals however, that the terrorist threats cannot be

defeated exclusively by kinetic means. It is in this realm the operational commanders can still be involved in CT operations in a non-kinetic way. Since ideology and propaganda have been identified as some of its most important driving causes behind terrorism, an effective CT effort requires a counter-ideological and counter-propaganda approach.[20] The operational commander is uniquely positioned to identify and counter terrorist activities by engaging in the counter-ideological fight.

Prior to devising a comprehensive counter-ideological approach, the ideology itself and the driving forces behind it must be defined and understood. Essentially, the CT professionals have to understand the problem set before they can devise a way to best affect it.[21] Although the pursuit of AQ is outlined in a new strategy, the concept is not new. AQ has been actively pursued by the U.S. military since the attacks on 9/11. Even in light of the changes in the U.S. domestic political makeup, the CT policies and the pursuit of AQ have remained functionally the same from their inception in 2001 to this day.[22]

Contrary to common belief, the military operations in Afghanistan in late 2001, was not the first time U.S. operational commanders had a chance to pursue AQ. The chance initially presented itself during the Bosnian conflict of 1992. However, the lack of cultural perspective, knowledge of local history, and the ghosts of the Cold War led U.S. commanders astray in dealing with AQ there.[23] The AQ activities in Bosnia served as a "bridge" between the operations in Afghanistan in the 1980's and 9/11. "To mujahidin across the Muslim world, Bosnia beckoned: they came, they saw, they killed, they networked."[24] In his address of the U.S. failure to address AQ in Bosnia, John R. Schindler, a veteran of the conflict, the author of "Unholy Terror," and a former intelligence professional, goes even further to point out that "[even] espionage is not substitute for hard-won knowledge of a region, its peoples, its language,

and its history; while good intelligence will make the truly informed even more so, it can be misleading to those without grounding in basic truths regarding what those in the business politely term 'the target.'"[25]

It is important to point out that in no way or form is the author condoning the atrocities perpetrated against the Muslims during the Bosnian conflict. However, it is just as important to understand that the Bosnian Muslim community was not a monolithic group of victims. If a Counterterrorist fails to navigate the cultural intricacies, the effects of cultural ignorance can be grave. To keep things in perspective, it is important to point out that Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, and the two of the 9/11 hijackers were veterans of the Bosnian conflict.[26]

Unfortunately, today's AQ discussion continues to be influenced by those who do not fully understand the full scope of the driving forces behind the movement. The western academia and news outlets have framed the AQ problem as a Salafi / Wahhabi problem. What is problematic is that these arguments, which have potential influence on how the threat is perceived, ignore the reality that "although it is true the Wahabi is Salafi, it is but one of Salafi's many orientations. Salafi and Wahabi are not two sides of the same coin. There are Salafis who are not Wahabis. There are Wahabis who are not Saudis. There are also Saudis who are neither Wahabis nor Salafis."[27]

The logic of those who automatically equate Wahhabi influence with Islamic militancy and AQ can be easily challenged by the example of Indonesia. The second largest Islamic organization in Indonesia, Muhammadiyah, has origins in Saudi Arabia and is Salafi-Wahhabi in its religious practices.[28] Yet, it is one of two moderate Islamic religious groups that regularly advocates against the use of Islamic Sharia law in the public sphere and whose members strive to be characterized by "open-mindedness, moderation, tolerance and a critical mind."[29] One thing is

clear: "the phenomenon of Islamic terrorism cannot be adequately explained as the export of Saudi Wahhabism, as many commentators claim."[30] The argument that is being made here is not whether or not the members of Wahhabi or Salafi branches of Islam are involved in the terrorist activities. The argument is that before CT is implemented, cross-cultural competence can play a key role in identifying the true driving factors behind terrorism.

Culture and Deterrence

In addition to the CT operations, the new strategy identifies the deterrence of a potential adversary is another mission set. Naturally, prevention of conflict is initially sought through deterrence. U.S. military deterrence is tied to the ability to first defeat a potential aggressor from achieving their goals and second "impose unacceptable costs" on them.[31] At its root, "effective deterrence demands that the status quo state possess the retaliatory capability to inflict costs that outweigh the benefits on a state that seeks to change the status quo."[32] The key to deterrence is that the potential aggressor truly understands the threat of reciprocation as real. Most of the modern theoretical thinking on deterrence has been formed by the decades of Cold War and the potential of a nuclear war. However, deterrence in practice "has existed in one form or another ever since human societies first clashed with one another."[33] Since the end of the Cold War, the thinking on deterrence has been changing. As Jeffrey Lewis, the director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Program at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies points out: "Technology is improving conventional forces, and we [U.S.] can no longer imagine credible scenarios in which using nuclear weapons would be consistent with our aims in the world."[34]

While the decision to deter a particular country or a non-state actor most likely will be made at the strategic level, the implementation will be left to the operational commanders. Theorist Milan Vego points out: "One should not rely mostly or, even worse, exclusively on

one's own experiences in dealing with the challenges of the future."[35] With the pivot to the Southeast Asia, we have to examine the deterrence experiences of others, U.S. recent deterrence experiences, and the potential future aggressors.

The Egypt-Israel deterrence case serves as an example of a failure to deter due to lack of cultural competence. Throughout 1950s and 1960s the Republic of Egypt allowed its territory to be used as staging area for terrorist attacks into Israel.[36] Israeli's used their military and conducted massive punitive attacks against Egyptian targets. Israeli commanders believed that a disproportionate military response would deter future Egyptian activities in support of Palestinian armed groups operating on its border. The Israeli's however, did not understand that their actions were in fact making the matters worse. "Israel's use of massive force violated Egyptian understandings about culturally 'appropriate' vengeance and retribution. In particular, Israelis misunderstood Egyptian conventions of appropriate 'proportionality' in these matters."[37] The Israelis framed the problem with the influence of Western coercive approach–deterrence. However Egyptians saw the disproportionate response as an attempt to shame and humiliate them, "leading to a serious loss of honor in a culture where honor is deeply valued."[38] Naturally, this led to even more Egyptian-sponsored cross-border incursions to erase the humiliation.[39]

While Israeli commanders eventually learned their lesson, the effect of U.S. deterrence activities in relation to Peoples Republic of China (PRC) are playing out as this paper is being written. In the past 30 years, PRC has emerged in the economic, political, and military scenes of South East Asia. This rise has been viewed as a challenge the regional status quo.[40] Those who subscribe to the "China Threat" theory do not rule out the possibility of an eventual U.S.–China armed conflict.[41] With the U.S. strategic pivot to the Southeast Asia, it seems that there is an attempt to deter China via conventional, non-nuclear means. It will be up to the U.S. operational

commanders to implement this apparent deterrence policy. The case of Taiwan has been the example of an effective deterrence approach that persuaded the Chinese that costs outweighed the benefits, if China was to go to war.[42] However, China specialists warn that "[the] effect of Western culturally-based persuasive strategies upon non-Western based cultures can easily lead to serious problems."[43] Is the Chinese threat truly understood within the cultural context?

As early as 1998, a treatise titled "Unrestricted Warfare" was published by two officers of the PRC People's Liberation Army. They outlined the irregular warfare techniques and approaches, effectively defining how PRC will fight in the future.[44] In his article in the Fletcher Forum of World Affairs, David J. Kilcullen, the former Senior Counterinsurgency Adviser to U.S. Army General Petraeus, points out several things about a potential conflict with PRC. Most importantly, he points out that while U.S. defense establishment is trying to make sure that future wars are conventional force-on-force conflicts, it is unlikely to happen. Kilcullen points out that irregular warfare will only become the norm.[45] Despite U.S. attempts to see PRC as a potential conventional war opponent, it will simply not fight a conventional war. "Given the overwhelming conventional military superiority of countries like the United States, it seems likely that any rational potential adversary (state or non-state) will continue to pursue irregular and asymmetric methods, so that the demand for these types of operations is unlikely to diminish any time soon."[46]

It is true that to some, China's military buildup is worrisome. However, China's perceptions of the foreign threat have been shaped by four millennia of history, rife with foreign intervention.[47] "The United States has displayed a poor record of fully appreciating the cultural imperatives that are behind Chinese decisionmaking[*sic*]."[48] Just because the deterrence approach had worked in the case of Taiwan, does not necessarily guarantee that it will work in

other parts of Southeast Asia. The current deterrence approaches utilize Western scientific methodology to "determine casualty-based responses."[49] This approach is simply inapplicable to PRC since their culture is "experiential."[50] The decision-making in experiential societies tends to be heavily influenced by what that society had experienced in the past rather on potential future repercussions.

Culture and Coalition Warfare

If U.S. forces were to become involved in a conflict with PRC or any other adversary, it is unlikely they would be fighting alone. The new strategy stresses that U.S. forces, whenever possible, will work with allies and coalition forces.[51] Not only must a U.S. commander understand how the enemy thinks and behaves, he must understand how to lead, motivate, and influence the coalition partners towards victory. These requirements make cross-cultural competence essential to mission accomplishment.

The concept of coalition warfare is not new. As research sponsored by U.S. Army in Europe (USAEUR) in 1996 points out, "Coalitions have been part of warfare since the earliest times. Both Troy and the Greeks had their own coalitions during the Trojan War."[52] However, the history of warfare shows us something else about coalition warfare other than the fact that it has existed for a long time. One is truly challenged to find two wars where the alliances and coalitions were identical. Each conflict brings together different interests and therefore different actors, or nations. The coalition warfare, unlike alliance warfare, by its nature is "transitory."[53] The coalitions "[emerge] in response to a specific threats and [dissolve] once coalition goals have been met."[54] With each new coalition, an American operational commander faces the everlasting challenge: "each member of a coalition has its own culture that is different—to a greater or lesser extent—from any other nation. These differences [are] in religion, class,

tolerance, work ethic, standards of living, and national tradition."[55]

The experiences with the western militaries and American traditional allies such as Australia or the United Kingdom, particularly in Iraq and Afghanistan, have proven to be mostly productive.[56] However, these operational experiences have exposed the fact that each coalition member deploys with their own military culture. Even closest and traditional American allies have military cultures that differ from the one of the United States. These cultural matters must be recognized as each military culture has affected the planning processes, planning systems, terminology, and operational concepts.[57]

Ultimately, the troops of a particular country are there to represent that country's interests and will act according to the limitations placed upon them by their country.[58] There are several explanations as to why coalition members place limitations on their military forces that are part of a coalition. One of the explanations is tied to the political systems and processes, authority, power structures, political decision making, which are inherent to a particular national culture.[59]

Another way to examine the reasons why certain countries used caveats is to examine them through the lens of Geert Hofstede's theories on cultural dimensions.[60] Hofstede's fourth cultural dimension is masculinity vs. femininity, dealing primarily with aggression, achievement, and gender roles in a culture (Figures 1 and 2).[61] It becomes apparent how societal differences can alter the dynamics in a coalition or alliance. For example, those societies that are considered feminine on the Hofstede's scale "generally tend to place excessive restrictions on what actions their militaries can take since aggressiveness is not valued."[62] Most problematic is that "this factor can strain an alliance when masculine countries demand more aggressiveness than their allies are willing to exhibit."[63]

Culture, Occupation, COIN, and Stability Operations

If deterrence fails and coalition warfare is utilized to defeat an adversary, the strategy points out that the territory and population will be secured and U.S. forces will "facilitate a transition to stable governance on a small scale for a limited period."[64] Although terms "small scale" and "limited period" are a bit vague, the fact remains that there is an expectation that a transition of power to the host nation should take place as soon as possible. What role do cultural factors play for an operational commander who is looking to facilitate such a transition in the most expeditious manner possible? Naturally, this situation can be painted in light of COIN operations. However, there are historical examples that are not necessarily COIN examples. Whether an operational commander is looking to stabilize an area to prevent an insurgency, stabilize an area to enable the defeat of insurgency, or simply looking to rebuild a devastated country, cultural competence is essential. The commander needs to know and understand the pre-existing cultural order, so that he does not inadvertently challenge, aggravate, or undermine it.[65]

The occupation of Japan after World War II serves as one such example. Some may argue that this example might not apply because of the sheer number of U.S. military personnel involved and the length of the occupation. However, the reason why the occupation of Japan is a good example is not because it was a short occupation or because it took few troops. It serves as a great example because it shows how an operational commander secured success through a decision based on cultural factors that defined the environment.

The occupation lasted almost seven years and involved U.S. 450,000 troops.[66] At the strategic level of war, certain preparations were made in anticipation of the occupation. Not only did the United States train Civil Affairs officers in military administration, but also in history and culture.[67] Senior military leaders tasked anthropologists such as Ruth Benedict to study various elements of Japanese culture. Benedict is credited with convincing President Roosevelt and U.S.

military leadership to leave the Japanese emperor out of the terms of surrender,[68] effectively averting a possible drawn-out insurgency. At the operational level of war, culturally-sound decisions were made as well: "In Japan, unfamiliarity with the Japanese language and culture forced the United States to rely heavily on preexisting political, bureaucratic, and social structures."[69] Essentially, the U.S. leadership understood that they knew very little of Japanese culture, customs, and modus operandi. Based on this recognition, the resultant policy of indirect occupation managed to achieve its objectives and prevent any possible uprisings or a widespread insurgency. "As reforms were designed and introduced, socio-cultural intelligence and research provided the critical background for constructively reforming Japan."[70]

Not every U.S. military occupation ends like it did in Japan. The recent examples of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq show how occupying forces can end up facing an insurgent threat. Although the new U.S. Strategy stresses that "U.S. forces will no longer be sized to conduct large-scale, prolonged stability operations,"[71] there is still an expectation for the U.S. military to retain the capability to conduct both the stability and COIN operations. Vego rightfully warns against "drawing definitive views on new lessons learned during a conflict or war. Deriving sound lessons requires that a certain period should pass after a particular event takes place."[72] Since the U.S. troops officially withdrew from Iraq in 2011 and the war in Afghanistan is still ongoing, drawing certain lessons learned might be hasty. Regardless of the timeline however, certain lessons learned from Iraq were adapted for application in Afghanistan. It was a natural progression. When a military perceives to have found a solution to a problem, it will try to apply the same solution to a similar problem. The clash with the insurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan made U.S. military leadership recognize the value of cultural knowledge. There was a realization that "traditional methods of warfighting have proven inadequate in Iraq and Afghanistan."[73]

The case of Iraq shows that the established "truths" of COIN outlined in the COIN manual might be overshadowed by cultural factors. The manual stresses that "good governance is normally a key requirement to achieve legitimacy of the HN government."[74] The logic follows that if people see how well the government is run, they will be convinced that it is good for them and therefore will stop supporting those who are in opposition. The examination of the COIN efforts in Ramadi 2004-05 and Tal Afar 2005-06 clearly shows that cultural factors had a more influential role than political stability.[75] Whereas Tal Afar's case shows that COIN efforts and good governance can be intertwined, the Ramadi case is quite contrary. "In Ramadi, identity politics clearly trumped quality of governance in shaping the course of events. The grievances that fueled the insurgency had far more to do with a deep sense of disenfranchisement within Iraq's Sunni community."[76] Ramadi residents simply cared more about who was ruling them as opposed to how they were being ruled. They cared more about the cultural factors than the good governance.

The case of Afghanistan presents a challenge tied to a similar set of circumstances. The problem with Afghanistan was that U.S. military wanted to treat it like Iraq. Major General Richard P. Formica, Commander of Combined Security Transition Commander-Afghanistan, had to point out that "Afghanistan isn't Iraq…We need to drastically improve our Afghan cultural awareness. Training for Iraq doesn't prepare Soldiers for Afghanistan."[77]

The attempts to facilitate centralized "good governance" have been backfiring and yet U.S. commanders continue pursue it. The following objectives can be easily attributed to the current U.S. objectives being pursued in Afghanistan: "The central bureaucracy would directly govern the countryside, administering security, justice, taxation, and social programs based on laws passed by a national Afghan parliament. . . . Women would enjoy equality . . . and be able

to marry men of their own choice."[78] Yet, they are the policy goals set by King Amanullah, whose rule of Afghanistan lasted from 1919 to 1929. It was cut short due an uprising of Pashtun tribes who did not want to lose power to a central authority.[79] This is an example of how COIN approaches in Afghanistan show ignorance not only of culture but of regional history. Vego warns against a possible "pitfall in transferring sound lessons learned…by failing to properly evaluate whether such lessons can be applied with little or no modification in another geographic, demographic, ethnic, or social situation."[80] It seems that those who saw the applicability of Iraq lessons-learned in Afghanistan, fell into the trap of cultural determinism.

The concept of cultural determinism argues that an individual person's behavior is predetermined by his culture.[81] The problem with this approach is that it is simply an analytic shortcut that ignores a variety of factors and simply anticipates a person's behavior based on the selected characteristics of his culture. This shortcut typically leads one to make an analytic overgeneralization. In the case of Afghanistan and Iraq, it seems that there was an assumption made that Afghans would behave the same way as Iraqis because they both belonged to tribal Muslim societies. Bottom line is that someone's culture is not only determined by fixed factors into which they were born (ethnic group, religion, language, etc) but also by the historical factors such as economic calamities and armed conflict.[82]

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered for implementation in order to improve the level cross-cultural competence in the U.S. military:

First, service members should be educated in the complexities of the American culture. According to the Linguistic Society of America (LSA), in 2009 there were 6,909 distinct and officially counted languages in the world.[83] There are 14 major religious groups in the world.[84]

With all the different languages, religions, ethnic groups, tribes, sub-tribes, sects, nationalities, economic, and political variations, there is nearly an infinite number of potential cultures to study. There are simply too many options. Before we understand other cultures, we have to understand our own. Once we recognize the complexities of our own culture, we will have a point of reference to structure our understanding of others.

Second, the cultural competency education has to be conducted at every point of the PME ladder. The education has to be incorporated into the classroom environment and long-distance education should be avoided. Not surprisingly, it is through the interaction with others that one learns how to better interact with others. The memorization of facts about a region does not make one an expert in that region or that culture. The cultures of the world are simply too dynamic. The social interaction simply cannot be learned from behind a computer screen.

Third, U.S. military should screen and identify those personnel who might be better in the realm of cross-cultural communications. It has been scientifically proven that certain people are better at cross-cultural communications than others. The ability to learn these skills has been strongly correlated with one's social skills.[85] U.S. military already has a system for psychological testing and evaluations. This system can be used to screen for cross-cultural communications potential. If a need arises, these personnel can be pulled into positions where their ability to communicate across cultures can be used to achieve mission success.

CONCLUSION

The past and present experiences demonstrate the importance of cultural competence and the role of cultural factors in the operational level of war. The post-September 11, 2001 cultural awakening produced various cultural competence improvement efforts. Will they suffice in supporting the efforts of the future operational commanders? No, the current U.S. military cross-

cultural capabilities and infrastructure is simply not ready to fully support operational commanders in their pursuit of the new strategic objectives. The recent calls to retrain U.S. military to fight the high-intensity fight are reminiscent of the post-Vietnam attempts to only fight clean, clearly defined wars. The problem is that with the current U.S. conventional weapons and war fighting capabilities, there is not one state actor that would fight the U.S. military on a conventional battlefield. Will the U.S. military repeat the mistakes of the post-Vietnam era and forget the importance of cultural factors until another "rediscovery" in a middle of a new conflict? Will the U.S. military have the benefit of time to "figure it out" again in the face of a potential adversary?

Naturally, any efforts to improve the U.S. military at this point will be examined within a fiscally restrictive framework. The reality of the matter is that U.S. military can improve its cross-cultural capability through extremely affordable means. Studying American culture does not require an army of contractors with various linguistic capabilities. There is no need to develop any special software packages. The incorporation of cultural training into every stage of the PME will also be fiscally sound as it will not require the establishment of any additional commands, centers, or cells.

FIGURES

1. *Power Distance*, related to the different solutions to the basic problem of human inequality;
2. *Uncertainty Avoidance*, related to the level of stress in a society in the face of an unknown future;
3. *Individualism* versus *Collectivism*, related to the integration of individuals into primary groups;
4. *Masculinity* versus *Femininity*, related to the division of emotional roles between women and men;
5. *Long Term* versus *Short Term Orientation*, related to the choice of focus for people's efforts: the future or the present and past.
6. *Indulgence* versus *Restraint*, related to the gratification versus control of basic human desires related to enjoying life.

Figure 1. Hostede's Six Cultural Dimensions[86]

Ten Differences Between Feminine and Masculine Societies

Femininity	Masculinity
Minimum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders	Maximum emotional and social role differentiation between the genders
Men and women should be modest and caring	Men should be and women may be assertive and ambitious
Balance between family and work	Work prevails over family
Sympathy for the weak	Admiration for the strong
Both fathers and mothers deal with facts and feelings	Fathers deal with facts, mothers with feelings
Both boys and girls may cry but neither should fight	Girls cry, boys don't; boys should fight back, girls shouldn't fight
Mothers decide on number of children	Fathers decide on family size
Many women in elected political positions	Few women in elected political positions
Religion focuses on fellow human beings	Religion focuses on God or gods
Matter-of-fact attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of relating	Moralistic attitudes about sexuality; sex is a way of performing

Figure 2. Hofstede's Fourth Dimension[87]

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